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PREFERENCE LEVEL

A preference level is, *inter alia*, a level to which one discount threshold is preferred over another. As such, it is a level of comparison and / or analysis between group units that do not necessarily include the same item(s) or measure volume in the same way. Page 17, lines 14-16; see also page 21, lines 2-8. For example, the ranks in FIG. 12 of 10 at 5000 lb, 20 at 10,000 lb, and 30 at 50,000 lb for group unit 124J-L and ranks of 5 at 15 items, 10 at 30 items, and 15 at 100 items indicate that the levels are preferred as follows:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Rank</u>
15 items	5
30 items; 5000 lb	10
100 items	15
10,000 lb	20
50,000 lb	30.

In this example, the discount threshold at 100 items would have a preference level greater than that of 5000 lb but less than that of 10,000 lb and 50,000 lb. To this extent, the preference level indicates how one discount threshold is graded relative to another. Page 20, col. 22 through page 21, col. 2.